Eng. Poetry vol 15

The Vanity of Upstarts:

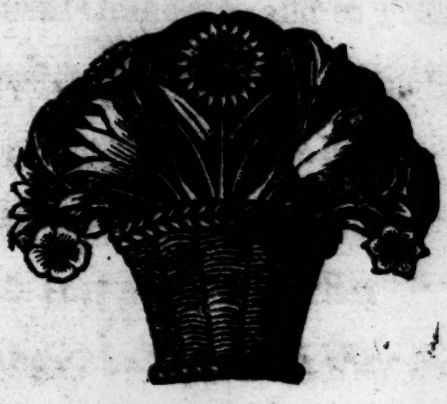
OR, AN

Honest Enquiry

INTO

Ignoble Greatness.

An ODE.



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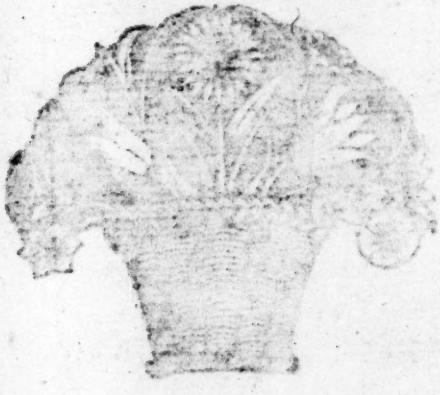

The Vanity of Upstarts.

An ODE.

1.

WHAT is it to be rich and great?
It is to be a Tool of State;
A mighty Slave by Honour ty'd
To outward Grandeur, and to Pride;
An Idol worshipp'd by his Slaves and Spies,
Who, for their own ignoble Ends,
Are Flatterers, not Friends,
Unthankful Traytors in Disguise;
Who, like their Masters, whom they serve for Pay,
Will fawn one Minute, and the next betray.

2.

It is to ſhew to lofty Thrones
Diſſembl'd Rev'rence and Reſpect,
To humbly bow to glitt'ring Crowns,
And humour mighty Kings in what they moſt affect;
But when they've Wealth and Honour gain'd,
And their own private Ends obtain'd,
Then to cajole ſome factious Sect,
And baſely recompence
The Bounty of their Prince,
With odious Treach'ry and Neglect.
Thus, like the Snake, ingrateful and unjuſt,
Offend the Royal Hand, that rais'd them from the Duſt.

3.

It is to frown, with awful Scorn,
On Mortals in an humbler Sphere,
To loudly boaſt how nobly born,
And think they're what they never were;

To

To talk of Families and Blood,
And vainly fancy they're deriv'd
Of ſome celeſtial Race;
Some ancient venerable God,
By Poets or by Prieſts contriv'd,
To give their old fictitious Tales
A more prevailing Grace:
But ſhould the ſkilful Herald trace
Their late obſcure Originals,
Some of their mean Deſcents would prove as baſe
As theirs, who ſweat and ſlave in *Paul's*;
And that their Honour, which they dream
Has ſo refin'd the purple Stream,
Was at firſt owing to the Charms
Of ſome bright Harlot's luſheous Arms,
And their great Anceſtor, the ſpurious Son
Of ſome fair *Lais* of the Age,
Tempted to quit the publick Stage,

To quench the luſtful Rage
Of ſome enamour'd Couſin to the Throne.

4.

It is to raiſe domeſtick Heats,
To gratify their Pride,
And then employ their reſtleſs Wits
T' impoſe a thouſand Cheats
On the tame Aſſes that they ride.
It is to think themſelves alone
The Fav'rites of the Gods,
And claim from them a Right of Pow'r
To puniſh and oppreſs the Low'r,
And awe whole Nations with a Frown;
To tremble at their threat'ning Nods;
That Crowds of Slaves may at their Elbows wait,
To make proud Ignorance appear more great.

5.

5.

It is to vainly patronize
That Wit themſelves could never boaſt,
And to be prais'd above the Skies,
By riming Flatt'rers, to their Coſt;
Who wanting Merit, purchaſe Fame
Of needy Poet, and of Prieſt,
Who labour by their tuneful Lays,
And ſwelling Sounds of fulſome Praiſe,
To gain the mighty Thing, a Name;
Who is perhaps poſſeſt
Of ill-got Riches to his Shame,
Drawn by Colluſion from the publick Cheſt.
Thus Atheiſts oft are pious made,
The Fool accounted wiſe,
And Knaves reported juſt, who have betray'd
Their King and Country, that themſelves might riſe.

6.

It is to ſhare the gainful Weight
Of all thoſe intricate Affairs,
That buſy and perplex the State,
And fill the Boſoms of the Great
With jealous Fears and noiſy Cares.
It is to palm the publick Wealth,
For nobler Ends deſign'd,
And to impoſe, by Treachery and Stealth,
A thouſand baſe ignoble Things,
Upon their Country and their Kings,
If they can Royal Wiſdom blind;
Pretending ſtill the Peoples Good,
In all the crafty Ills they do,
Tho' thro' a coſtly purple Flood
Of their own Nation's Blood,
Their own ambitious Ends unweary'd they purſue.

7.

It is to do a thouſand Wrongs
To ſerve their Int'reſt or Revenge,
Yet ſtudy Arts to be believ'd
By thoſe they've o'er and o'er deceiv'd
By their bifarious Tongues,
As ſubject as their Minds to change;
And tho' of Promiſes they're free,
Their Words and Actions diſagree,
Unleſs to ſerve themſelves;
And then they fawn, and lay aſide
That awful Scorn, and nauſeous Pride,
Which on their Looks and Carriage wait;
But to a well-deſerving Friend,
Who on their Favours ſhall depend,
Their frothy Vows are ſandy Shelves:
Such ſhall ſollicit long in vain,
And undergo the ſlaviſh Pain

Of fruitleſs Cringes, to augment the State
Of him ſo proud and great,
Among a Crowd of Duns, who haunt his ſtarving Gate.

8.

It is to talk profuſely loud
Of Merit, which they ne'er reward,
And preach up Vertue to the Crowd.
But ſee it ſtarve without Regard;
To uſe the Church for Faſhion's Sake,
Diſſemble Piety at Pray'rs;
But yet ſuch ſecret Meaſures take
As may the Union of her Members break,
And fill her with deſtructive Feuds and Jars,
That her impatient Enemies
May grow too pow'rful by Degrees,
And triumph o'er her unawares.
So the ſwift Hawk, with eager Wings,
Climbs o'er the Prey he would confound,

Then

Then with a ſwooping Stroke he brings
The weaker Quarry to the Ground.

9.

It is to fill their Tradeſmens Books
With num'rous Articles, and then
To make 'em wait with fretful Looks,
And dun 'em twice a Week in vain;
Whilſt the proud Debtors from above,
Look down upon the patient Crowd,
Who near their Gates caballing move,
But want the Courage to complain aloud;
Tho' in their Hearts, they wiſh unfold
Thoſe coſtly Goods they were ſo free
With humble Fingers to unfold,
Before ſuch awful Quality;
Who, tho' they graciouſly reward
The fawning Pimp, or riming Bard;

Yet 'tis a Point of Grandeur to be ſlow
In paying what they juſtly owe.
Thus the poor Creditor ſhall wait in Pain,
To know what Time to come again,
Whilſt Bawds and Minions ſhall their Ends obtain.

10.

It is to ride in Pomp about,
Expecting Homage from the Rout,
Who at the gawdy Sight, conceives
The ſwelling Idol of the Crowd
To be divinely knowing, and believes
He muſt be wiſe and juſt, becauſe ſo proud.
His fine gilt Coach, his pamper'd Brutes,
His brawny Slaves in coſtly Sutes,
His flaxen Wig, his ſcarlet Cloak,
His lolling Eaſe, his awful Look,
Convince the Fools, who gaze upon
The Grandeur of the mighty Don,

He muſt be good, becauſe ſo great,
And happy, 'cauſe ſo fortunate;
When all his Pomp, that we behold,
His large Eſtate, his Heaps of Gold,
May from the Publick be unjuſtly glean'd,
And he a mercenary Fox,
From Juſtice by ſome Int'reſt ſkreen'd,
When he has wrong'd the Box.
Thus ſpurr'd by Avarice and Pride,
Some crafty Knaves have got the Start,
And thro' the Streets in Coaches ride,
Who well deſerve a Cart.

II.

To Battel one conducts his Slaves,
Another turns the Wheel of State,
A third in Triumph ploughs the Waves,
And boaſts at Sea ſome mighty Feat;

A fourth in Senate talks aloud,
And with his Rhet'rick gulls the Crowd
To credit what he ſpeaks or pens;
A fifth projects ſome grand Deſign,
To make the Nation part
More freely with their vital Coin,
And ſooths them by ſome ſubtle Art
T'approve his Ways and Means;
Not that the publick Good excites
The active Hero to be brave,
Or moves the Learn'd to rack his Wits,
Or tempts the choſen K——t to prove a Knave.
Their own by Ends alike they ſeek,
To be ſecure of Wealth and Eaſe,
That when aloft the Vultures tow'r,
And graſp ſufficient Pow'r,
They may oppreſs the Weak,
And injure whom they pleaſe;

Challenge extravagant Rewards,
They ſcarce can think they have deſerv'd;
And when become our mighty Lords,
Complaining thouſands muſt be ſtarv'd.
Thus the Bold triumph o'er the humble Herd,
Some by their Craft, and others by the Sword;
Whilſt pious Knaves, who all that's good deſpiſe,
Share in the Booty, and to Greatneſs riſe.

FINIS.

Challenge extraordinary Rewards,
They scarce can think they have deserv'd,
And when become our mighty Lords,
Complaining Slanders must be heard.
Thus the Bold triumph o'er the humble Head,
Some by their Cunning, and others by the Sword;
While pious Knaves, who [illegible]'s good deeds,
Share in the Booty, and no [illegible]rile.

FINIS.